

# RALPH and NELL's Ramble to OXFORD.



I Heard much talk of Oxford town,  
And fain I wou'd go thither,  
When ploughing and sowing time was done,  
It being gallant weather.  
Vather to it did agree,  
That Nell and I should go;  
But mother cry'd, that we should ride,  
So we had Dobbin too.

Zo I goes unto zister Nell,  
And bids her make her ready,  
And put on her Zunday clofe,  
As vine as any lady:  
'Tis a gallant day, the morning's grey,  
And likely to be fair;  
Therefore make hafte, and soon be lac'd,  
And I'll go bait the mare.

So up upon the mare we got,  
And away we rid together,  
And every body that we met,  
We ask'd how far 'twas thither.  
'Till at the last, when on the top  
Of Chiffeldon we did rise,  
I fomewhat spy'd like steeples, and cry'd,  
Zooks, Nell, look yonder 'tis.

So when as nearer to't we come,  
We zee folks, infant thick:  
I heard a little bastard zay,  
Look, here comes country Dick.



Another bastard call'd me Ralph:  
And how is't honest Joan?  
Nay Roger too, and little Sue,  
And all the folk at home.

Zo we rode on and nothing said,  
But looked for an alehouse:  
At last we zee a hugeous sign,  
As big as any gallows.  
It was Two Dogs, so in we rode,  
And called for the hostler,  
Out came a lusty fellow then,  
I wa'nt he was a wrestler.

Here take this horse, and set'en up,  
And gi'en a lock of hay;  
For we are come to zee the town,  
And tarry here all day.  
Yes, Sir, said he, and call'd the maid,  
That stood within the entry:  
She had us into a room as clean,  
As though we had been gentry.

So we zet down, and bid them fetch,  
A flaggon of their beer:  
But when it come, Nell shook her head,  
And zed 'Twas plagy dear.  
Says she to me, If we stay here long,  
'Twill soon make us go a-begging;  
For I am fure it cannot be,  
Zo much as old Martin's flaggon.

So we got up, and away we went,  
To zee the gallant town.  
And at the gate we met a man  
With a plitful ragged gown:  
As for his sleeves, I do believe,  
That they were both torn off,  
And instead of a hat he wore a cap,  
'Twas a trencher covered with cloth.

And as we were going along the town,  
I thought I had found a knife:  
I stooped down to pick it up,  
But was ne'er so sham'd in my life.  
For the under side was all be—t,  
With an arrant Christian's t—d:  
The boys fell a hallowing, An April Fool!  
But I zed ne'er a word.

As we went thro' a narrow lane,  
One catch'd fast hold of Zister,  
He'd parsons close, and he did'nt know us,  
But fain he wou'd ha' kiss'd her.  
He was so plagy vine; but to my mind,  
He look'd much like a wench:  
I up wi' my stick, and gi'en a lick,  
I believe it split his trencher.

Then we went into a very vine place,  
And there we went to church;  
I kneeled down to say my prayers,  
And did not think any hurt:  
In the middle of the prayers, just up stairs,  
Was bag pipes to my thinking;  
And the folks be'ow fell a singing too,  
As tho' they had been drinking.

I did'nt like the doings there,  
And zo I took my hat;  
I did'nt think they'd zo ha' done,  
In such a place as that.  
But Nell was for staying till they had done  
Because she lik'd the tunes, (playing,  
For she was fure she ne'er did hear  
Old Crundall play zuch at home.

Then we went into a vine garden,  
All upon a hill;  
And j' ft below a dial did grow,  
Much like a waggon-wheel;  
But bigger by half, which made laugh,  
'Twas like a garden knot;

When the zun shone bright, it went as right  
As our parson's clock.

Then we went out of that vine place,  
And went into another:  
Which was vorty times as vine  
As any of the other:  
Bless me! our John quite all along  
There's books pil'd up like mows:  
Vaith Nell, I wish that mother was here,  
If 'twas not for the cows.

And in the middle stood two things,  
As round as any ball;  
They told us 'twas the picture of  
The world, zer, and all.  
And those who knew how to turn them right  
And how to turn them round,  
Could tell us what it was o'clock  
In the world under ground,

And many more things they could tell,  
That was as most as strange;  
As when the zun should zet and rise,  
And when the moon shou'd change.  
I did not care to stand so near,  
When all those things I heard:  
For I thought in my heart, it was the black  
And I was a little afraid.

The zun being low, then we begun,  
To think of going home;  
But one thing more, we zaw before  
We got quite out of town.  
We went apace, for being in hafte,  
For fear of being benighted;  
Two hugeous men stood strutting within,  
And Nell and I was frightened.

Nell had a colour as red as a rose,  
And durst not go any furdur  
They had bloody weapons in their handt,  
Stood ready there for murder.  
So we went back and took our mare,  
And away came trotting home,  
Wi' stories enough to tell Vather and Mother  
And little sifter Joan.

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